

Well, Julianne fell for him anyway, and it is a good thing she did. This former schoolteacher is better than anyone at keeping him centered, and she has even taught students who would go on to serve on SAXBY's staff. So it is really quite a partnership. SAXBY says that the most significant moment of his life is when he met Julianne.

That is really something when we consider how much he loves golf. Last year, SAXBY sank a hole in one squaring off against the leader of the free world—that is, the President of the United States. He has a signed flag to prove it.

But golf is more than just a hobby for SAXBY. It is a way to get things done. More than most people around here, he understands the value of relationships. He is good at whipping votes and picking up intel from both ends of the Capitol. He works across the aisle, and he is unafraid to stand up when something needs to be said.

That is the thing about SAXBY. He doesn't say a lot, but when he does, you know it is significant. You know there is a lot of careful thought behind it.

SAXBY is a serious legislator who approaches his role as vice chairman of the Intelligence Committee in that frame. SAXBY learns things on that committee that would keep anyone up at night. It is a grave responsibility. But SAXBY is perfectly suited to it. He has always stood proudly in defense of our Nation.

We are going to miss his sharp wit, his integrity, and his judgment.

I know SAXBY's staff is going to miss him, too. Some of them have been with him since his days in the House. Well, the Senate's loss is the Chambliss family's gain.

I know SAXBY is looking forward to spending more time with Julianne. I know he can't wait to trade the title of Senator for a new one—Big Daddy. It is what his grandkids call him. He can't wait to see more of them. They are the reason he works so hard here—to build a better future for them, for the next generation.

SAXBY will have plenty of stories to share when he leaves, such as when he hit that hole in one, when he threw out the first pitch for the Braves, and when he made the cover of Peanut Patriot Magazine.

So SAXBY has obviously had a long and interesting career. He deserves some time to focus on his family. We thank him for his dedication to this body and to the people he represents, and we send him every wish for a retirement filled with joy and happiness.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIRE-FIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the message to accompany H.R. 3979, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 3979, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Pending:

Reid motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill.

Reid motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill, with Reid amendment No. 3984 (to the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill), to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 3985 (to amendment No. 3984), of a perfecting nature.

Reid motion to refer the message of the House on the bill to the Committee on Armed Services, with instructions, Reid amendment No. 3986, to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 3987 (to (the instructions) amendment No. 3986), of a perfecting nature.

Reid amendment No. 3988 (to amendment No. 3987), of a perfecting nature.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I am pleased to join with Senator INHOFE, the ranking Republican on the Senate Armed Services Committee, to bring to the floor H.R. 3979. This is the agreement between the Armed Services Committees of the Senate and House on the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015. The House of Representatives passed the bill last week by a vote of 300 to 119. If we succeed in the Senate, it will mark the 53rd year in a row that we have enacted this bill that is so essential to the defense of our Nation and to our men and women in uniform and their families.

I thank all the members of the staff of the Senate Armed Services Committee, especially our subcommittee chairs for the hard work they have done to get us to the finish line on this bill. I thank Senator INHOFE for his close partnership. Before this Congress I had been fortunate to serve with a series of Republican chairmen and ranking members, including JOHN MCCAIN, John Warner, and Strom Thurmond. They understood and appreciated the traditions of our committee and the importance of the legislation we enact every year for our men and women in uniform. That is what this is all about. JIM INHOFE, our ranking Republican in this Congress, has upheld that tradition of bipartisanship and dedication to enacting this important legislation through particularly challenging circumstances.

Our bill includes hundreds of important provisions to authorize the activities of the Department of Defense and to provide for the well-being of our men and women in uniform and their families. The bill will enable the military services to continue paying special pay and bonuses needed for recruitment and retention of key personnel. It strengthens survivor benefits for disabled children of servicemembers and retirees. It includes provisions addressing the employment of military spouses, job placement for veterans, and military child custody disputes. It addresses military hazing, military suicide, post-traumatic stress disorder, and mental health problems in the military. It provides continuing impact to support military families and local school districts.

The bill includes 20 provisions to continue to build on the progress we are starting to make in addressing the scourge of sexual assault in the military. Key provisions will eliminate the so-called good soldier defense, give victims a voice in whether their case is prosecuted in military or civilian courts, give victims the right to challenge court-martial rulings that violate their rights at the court of criminal appeals, and would strengthen the psychotherapist-patient privilege. Last week we received the welcome news that the number of incidents of unwanted sexual contact in the military is down and that more incidents are being reported so victims can receive the care and assistance they need and perpetrators can be brought to justice. With the enactment of the legislation before us and the commitment of military leaders, we hope to build on these trends.

The bill provides continued funding and authorities for ongoing operations in Afghanistan and for our forces conducting operations against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria called ISIS.

As requested by the administration, it authorizes the Department of Defense to train and equip vetted members of the moderate Syrian opposition and to train and equip national and local forces who are actively fighting ISIS in Iraq. It establishes a counterterrorism partnership fund that provides the administration new flexibility in addressing emerging terrorist threats around the world. In addition, the bill extends the Afghanistan Special Immigrant Visa Program, providing for 4,000 new visas, and addresses a legal glitch that precluded members of the ruling parties in Kurdistan from receiving visas under the Immigration and Nationality Act.

The authority provided in this bill to train and equip local forces in Iraq and Syria to take on ISIS is particularly important because our military leaders and intelligence experts have uniformly told us airstrikes alone will not be sufficient to defeat ISIS. American air power has changed the momentum on the ground somewhat and given moderates in the region an opportunity